

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 AID-20 PC-10 DRC-01 FEA-02 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 INT-08 SCI-06 /170 W
----- 001372

R 171419Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9687
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 0325

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PINT, PE, EC

SUBJECT: PERUVIAN-ECUADOREAN CONSULTATIONS

REF: QUITO 0242; LIMA 0370

1. SUMMARY: BETWEEN ABOUT CHRISTMAS AND LAST WEEK RUMORS OF SERIOUS PERUVIAN-ECUADOREAN BORDER DIFFICULTIES GREW IN INTENSITY AND WILDNESS IN GUAYAQUIL AND QUITO. MILITARY ESPECIALLY HAVE FED RUMOR MILL, BUT APPARENTLY HAVE HAD "LEGS CUT OFF" BY FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT THAT ECUADOREAN-PERUVIAN RELATIONS DEVELOPING NORMALLY AND THAT ALL RELATIONSHIPS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED WITHIN USUAL CHANNELS. PERUVIAN PRESIDENT VELASCO STATEMENT RE LACK OF THREAT FROM BORDERING STATES AND PROPOSING 10 YEAR MORATORIUM ON ARMS PURCHASES MAY HAVE HAD ITS EFFECT TOO. END SUMMARY.

2. AROUND CHRISTMASTIME WE HEARD RUMOR FROM MILITARY SOURCE THAT, AS RESULT OF REFUSAL RECEIVE NOTE WHICH ECUADOREAN AMBASSADOR ATTEMPTED HAND PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, IF PROBABLE REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH COUNTRIES
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WOULD BE PNGED FROM RESPECTIVE PLACES OF ASSIGNMENT.

QUESTION AT ISSUE WAS NOT KNOWN, BUT USUAL SUPPOSITION OF BORDER PROBLEM WAS LAUNCHED AND IT WAS RUMORED PERUVIANS WERE ENCROACHING ON ECUADOREAN OIL PROPERTY BY GIVING CONCESSION TO OIL COMPANY IN OR NEAR DISPUTED BORDER AREA.

3. FROM THEN ON, GENERALLY FED BY SOME ELEMENTS OF MILITARY, BUT WITH PARTICIPATION OF ANTI-PERUVIAN BUSINESS AND OTHER ELEMENTS IN GUAYAQUIL, RUMORS ABOUNDED OF TROOP MOVEMENTS, MILITARY LEAVE CANCELLATIONS AND SACKING OF ECUADOREAN CONSULATE IN TUMBEZ, ALL OF WHICH PRODUCED CONCERN. CONGEN GUAYAQUIL REPORTED TO EMBASSY RUMORS EVEN OF BORDER CLASHES. HOWEVER, DATT MILITARY SOURCES STRONGLY REFUTE REPORTS OF CLASHES OR EVEN CONTACT AMONG TROOPS AT BORDER.

4. FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT (SEE REFTTEL), FOLLOWING LIGHTENING VISIT TO QUITO OF PERUVIAN SECRETARY GENERAL FO FOREIGN AFFAIRS CARLOS GARCIA BEDOYA, PUT END TO CONCERN WITHOUT EXPLAINING WHAT MATTERS WERE UNDER DISCUSSION. OSWALDO RAMIREZ (FONMIN DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT OF TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY) TOLD EMBOFFS JANUARY 15 THAT THERE HAD BEEN INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS IN RECENT WEEKS, BUT ABSOLUTELY NO CLASHES AND NO TROOP MOVEMENTS AND THAT NO OIL PROBLEMS HAD BEEN INVOLVED. HE MENTIONED CONTINUING PROBLEMS OF NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WITH RESPECT TO DEVELOPMENT OF RIVER BEDS AND ROADS, TRADE PROBLEMS AND FAIRS AND NOTED THAT OCCASIONALLY SUCH DIFFERENCES REQUIRED ESPECIALLY CAREFUL HANDLING. IN ANY CASE, FOLLOWING EXCHANGES IN LIMA AND QUITO, PROBLEMS HAD BEEN COMPLETELY AND SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED.

5. COMMENT: FROM MILITARY SOURCES WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS OF INEPTNESS OF FOREIGN MINISTER WHO, WITHOUT CABINET APPROVAL, REPORTEDLY ATTEMPTED HAVE DELIVERED OFFENSIVE NOTE PROVOKING MINI-CRISIS. MORE LIKELY, AS RAMIREZ INDICATED, FORMULATIONS RELATING TO SENSITIVE PROBLEMS ARISING BETWEEN NEIGHBORS (ESPECIALLY BETWEEN COUNTRIES WITH HISTORY LIKE ECUADOR AND PERU) MAY BE INTERPRETED IN UNGENEROUS WAY. INCIDENT WAS SEIZED
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UPON BY MILITARY TO LEND SUPPORT TO THEIR INTEREST IN ARMS PURCHASES. VISIT TO QUITO OF GARCIA BEDOYA AND SUBSEQUENT FONMIN STATEMENT PUT END TO RUMORS. VELASCO PROPOSAL FOR ARMS PURCHASE MORATORIUM AND STATEMENT THAT NO THREAT EXISTED FROM PERU'S NEIGHBORS MAY ALSO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO QUIETING MILITARY.

6. FINAL SOLUTION (IF IT REALLY IS FINAL) TO

CONTRETEMPS WAS DONE WITH PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMATIC
DEXTERITY AND IS TRIBUTE TO COOLER HEADS IN BOTH
GOVERNMENTS. GIVEN PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ' RESTRAINT WITH
RESPECT TO ARMS PURCHASES IN PAST, WE SUSPECT HE HAD
STRONG INTEREST IN AMICABLE RESOLUTION THIS PROBLEM,
WHATEVER IT WAS, SO AS TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE HIS ROLE
OF MODERATING ARMS DEMANDS OF HIS SOLDIER COLLEAGUES.
BREWSTER

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